NEWS RELEASE
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
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BLS

Occupational Employment and Wages in Brownsville-Harlingen, May 2014

Workers in the Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of $15.69 in May 2014, about 31 percent below the nationwide average of $22.71, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 17 of the 22 major occupational groups, including construction and extraction; computer and mathematical; and installation, maintenance, and repair. Local wages in the five remaining occupational groups were not statistically different from their respective national averages.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, Brownsville employment was more highly concentrated in 5 of the 22 occupational groups, including personal care and service; education, training, and library; and office and administrative support. Conversely, 12 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including business and financial operations; management; and computer and mathematical. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Brownsville-Harlingen		United States	Brownsville-Harlingen		Percent difference[1]
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%		$22.71	$15.69	*	-31
Management	5.0	2.6	*	54.08	39.20	*	-28
Business and financial operations..................	5.1	2.3	*	34.81	27.33	*	-21
Computer and mathematical	2.8	0.5	*	40.37	27.15	*	-33
Architecture and engineering	1.8	0.4	*	39.19	31.55	*	-19
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.2	*	33.69	26.29	*	-22
Community and social service.......................	1.4	1.5		21.79	20.86		-4
Legal...	0.8	0.5	*	48.61	38.29		-21
Education, training, and library......................	6.2	9.1	*	25.10	20.31	*	-19
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media..	1.3	0.6	*	26.82	18.11	*	-32
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	5.9		36.54	37.13		2
Healthcare support	2.9	4.0	*	13.86	10.71	*	-23
Protective service	2.4	3.6	*	21.14	20.67		-2
Food preparation and serving related	9.1	9.3		10.57	9.51	*	-10
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance..	3.2	3.2		12.68	9.41	*	-26
Personal care and service............................	3.1	13.0	*	12.01	8.66	*	-28
Sales and related	10.5	10.1		18.59	13.01	*	-30
Office and administrative support..................	16.0	17.2	*	17.08	12.59	*	-26
Farming, fishing, and forestry.......................	0.3	0.1	*	12.09	13.38		11

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Brownsville-Harlingen		United States	Brownsville-Harlingen		Percent difference[1]
Construction and extraction............................	3.9	2.0	*	22.40	13.72	*	-39
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.3	*	21.74	15.20	*	-30
Production	6.6	5.0	*	17.06	12.47	*	-27
Transportation and material moving...............	6.8	5.9	*	16.57	12.72	*	-23

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Brownsville-Harlingen is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

Note: * The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group – education, training, and library – was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Brownsville had 12,090 jobs in education, training, and library, accounting for 9.1 percent of local employment, significantly higher than the 6.2-percent national share. However, the local wage for this occupational group was significantly below the U.S. average. At $20.31 an hour, the mean wage for Brownsville education, training, and library workers was about 19 percent below the $25.10 national average.

With employment of 2,500, elementary school teachers, except special education, was one of the largest occupations within the education, training, and library group, as were teacher assistants (1,870). Among the higher paying jobs were secondary school teachers, except special and career/technical education, as well as middle school teachers, except special and career/technical education, averaging a mean annual wage of $50,960 and $50,540, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were teacher assistants ($22,790) and substitute teachers ($23,580). (Detailed data for the education, training, and library group are presented in table 1; for a complete listing of occupations see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_15180.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See table 1.) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Brownsville metropolitan area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the education, training, and library group. For instance, substitute teachers, were employed at 2.7 times the national average in Brownsville. A similarly high rate was registered for middle school teachers, except special and career/technical education, who were employed at 2.3 times the national rate, among the highest rates in all metropolitan areas for this particular occupation. On the other hand, special education teachers, kindergarten and elementary school, had a location quotient of 1.1 in Brownsville, indicating that this occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Texas Workforce Commission.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are also surveyed, but their data are not included in the national estimates. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year. May 2014 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, and November 2011. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 74.3 percent based on establishments and 70.5 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.1 percent of total national employment. (Response rates are slightly lower for these estimates due to the federal shutdown in October 2013.) The sample in the Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,445 establishments with a response rate of 59 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and 821 detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas. In addition, employment and wage estimates for 94 minor groups and 458 broad occupations are available in the national data. OES data by state and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan area are available from www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcst.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcma.htm, respectively.

The May 2014 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** includes Cameron County in Texas.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southwest. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014

Occupation[1]	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level[2]	Location quotient[3]	Hourly	Annual[4]
Education, training, and library occupations	12,090	1.5	$20.31	$42,240
Vocational education teachers, postsecondary...............	[5]	[5]	28.75	59,790
Preschool teachers, except special education	270	0.8	22.41	46,620
Kindergarten teachers, except special education	250	1.6	[5]	46,780
Elementary school teachers, except special education ..	2,500	1.9	[5]	48,810
Middle school teachers, except special and career/technical education..........................	1,440	2.3	[5]	50,540
Career/technical education teachers, middle school.......	60	4.1	[5]	50,510
Secondary school teachers, except special and career/technical education..........................	1,900	2.0	[5]	50,960
Career/technical education teachers, secondary school.	200	2.5	[5]	50,100
Special education teachers, kindergarten and elementary school	210	1.1	[5]	49,840
Special education teachers, middle school	100	1.1	[5]	47,730
Special education teachers, secondary school	200	1.5	[5]	48,630
Adult basic and secondary education and literacy teachers and instructors	100	1.6	17.05	35,470
Self-enrichment education teachers..............................	90	0.5	12.20	25,380
Teachers and instructors, all other, except substitute teachers..........................	180	0.7	[5]	29,450
Substitute teachers...........................	1,630	2.7	11.34	23,580
Librarians..........................	160	1.2	25.59	53,220
Instructional coordinators	120	0.9	31.37	65,240
Teacher assistants...........................	1,870	1.6	[5]	22,790

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Brownsville-Harlingen MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_15180.htm.
(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.
(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.
(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full-time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.
(5) Estimates not released.